



**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
7 DECEMBER 2020**

Agenda No

11(iii)

Officer: Helen Ball Town Clerk

COMBINED SEWAGE OVERFLOWS

1 Purpose of the Report

- (i) To update members of the impact of Combined Sewage Overflows on the River Severn and in particular effects on Town Council Operations;
- (ii) To consider any further action to be taken.

2 What is a Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO)

Along the river bank within the town centre there are 10 Combined Sewage Outflows; details of the locations and frequency of discharges of these CSOs is listed below; one of which discharges directly into the townside fishpass at the Weir. These are Overflow Tanks holding raw sewage and storm water. Combined sewer overflow refers to sewer systems without separate components for storm water and wastewater. In effect, storm water and wastewater all flow through the same system (combined) to a wastewater treatment facility. Water Authorities are granted licences to discharge its sewers (untreated sewage) directly out into the river particularly during storms. This ensures that there will never be any backing up of sewerage into properties.

This YouTube link will explain it better

<https://youtu.be/x1AmHDBYodI>

3 Situation locally

The discharge from these Overflows has been brought to Officers attention particularly this year, both during the floods and the summer period where the river levels were low, the flow of the river was quiet and the overflows were most visible.

After the floods subsided it was noticeable the amount of sanitary products that were residual in the foliage along the river.

During the summer months the scale and volume of the discharges from these overflows has been very visible. Traditionally the sewerage would discharge into the bed of the river and disperse as the pipe is usually below the river line, but as the levels have reduced the sewage has been visible on the surface of the river and is taking longer to disperse.

This has become a problem to anglers for not only are they catching sanitary products in their lines, the fish become very unsettled by this level of pollution.



Below are pictures that were recently shared on Twitter



The Severn is the daily venue for rowing clubs, canoeists [individuals and a growing number of commercial operators], anglers, bankside walkers, increasing numbers of swimmers enjoy the waters, riverboat trips, paddleboards, otter spotters and casual visitors. Riverside pubs are more resilient thanks to their location and despite the challenges of this year to the visitor economy the Severn is and always will be fundamental to the quality of that experience.

Members may wish to visit the Rivers Trust website 'Is My River Fit to Play in?' <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/555f3807d2a1499cbbf5ca2dd58df0f3> and consider whether the Severn is fit to play in.



The data below has been taken from the above website

CSO Location	Licence No	How many discharges in 2019?	How many hours in 2019?
Burton Street CASTLEFIELDS & DITHERINGTON	S/02/21039/01	177	2301
Victoria Street CASTLEFIELDS & DITHERINGTON	S/02/21365/0	170	2514
Dana Steps CASTLEFIELDS & DITHERINGTON	S/02/21486/0	161	2650
Longden Coleham BELLE VUE	NPSWQD005469	65	558
Victoria Ave (Greyfriars) QUARRY & COTON HILL	S/02/21032/0	162	3140
Radbrook Storm Sewer BELLE VUE	S/02/21033/0	144	2759
Victoria Avenue (Crescent Fields) QUARRY & COTON HILL	S/02/21017/0	124	2000
Bridge Street/Hills Lane QUARRY & COTON HILL	S/02/21107/0	201	248
Smithfield Road QUARRY & COTON HILL	S/02/21024/0	47	348
The Flash QUARRY & COTON HILL	S/02/21023/0	54	457

Putting this into perspective there are 8760 hours in a year.

4 Groundswell of Concern

There are a growing number of individuals and organisations who are flagging this as a concern not just Shrewsbury Town Council and anglers through Shrewsbury Town Fisheries; this has been raised by the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Sabrina River Boat Company, Telford Angling Association, partners at the EA, local residents, community river groups and other NGOs such as the Severn Rivers Trust.

Officers have raised this through the Council's national membership of the Angling Trust who are not only following the effects of CSOs along the River Severn in Shrewsbury, but in Ironbridge and Bridgnorth and further afield along water courses in Ilkley, Mold and Windrush in the Cotswolds. The Trust is keen to work with organisations locally to seek pressure on those to change the licencing system.

Philip Dunne, MP for Ludlow is the Chairman of the Environment Audit Committee and has submitted a Private Members Bill on this subject (details attached to this report). Peter Lambert from the Shropshire Wildlife Trust has sent representations to the MP raising matters locally.

Members are asked to consider whether it wishes to address this issue further.



Members might find the following links useful.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/severn-trent-water-prosecuted-for-shropshire-sewage-pollution>

Possible solution following an example in Upton, Worcester

<https://www.malverngazette.co.uk/news/18571050.council-approves-new-pumping-station-upton-stop-sewage-entering-river-severn-worcestershire/>

Similar Problems in Nottinghamshire

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/reason-raw-sewage-being-pumped-4240137>

Severn Trent 5 year strategic plan

https://www.stwater.co.uk/content/dam/stw/about_us/pr19-documents/sve_appendix_a9_drainage_and_wastewater_management_plan

WFD EU framework

http://www.switchurbanwater.eu/outputs/pdfs/W2-1_GEN_PAP_Combined_sewer_overflow_quality.pdf

Recent article highlighting the problem with CSO discharge

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jul/01/water-firms-raw-sewage-england-rivers>

Government framework for CSO's

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-companies-environmental-permits-for-storm-overflows-and-emergency-overflows/water-companies-environmental-permits-for-storm-overflows-and-emergency-overflows>

Outlines for strategy against climate change for water companies.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/20g8xve50gewkoj/Water%20UK%20DWMP%20Framework%20Report%20Main%20Document.pdf?dl=0>

Assessments for CSO

<http://www.water.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/SOAF.pdf>

Environment Agency CSO guidelines

<https://www.waterbriefing.org/home/regulation-and-legislation/item/15456-environment-agency-issues-new-guidance-to-water-companies-on-permits-for-storm-and-emergency-overflows>
http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/nvz/NVZ2017_S601_Datasheet.pdf